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Book Reviews

The Bellum Civile of Petronius. Edited with introduction, commentary, and translation by FLORENCE THEODORA BALDWIN, PH.D. Columbia University Press.

This is an elaborate study somewhat in the manner of Ball's study upon Seneca's satire on Claudius, upon the 295 hexameter lines of Petronius sometimes called the *Bellum Civile*.

In the introduction the author comes to about the same conclusion as Collignon that the poem is in no sense a satire upon Lucan's work. She suggests that a writer of such keen satirical power as Petronius would have left no doubt as to the satirical intent had such been his purpose. This view certainly appears to be the reasonable one.

For all the wealth of information contained in the notes where this bears directly upon the elucidation of the text the student of Petronius will be grateful. Some of the information seems out of place. The reader need not be told what Helicon was. The famous phrase *curiosa felicitas* requires no explanation, and to devote ten lines to the circumstances attending Pompey's death seems superfluous in a work of this type. This tendency and the practice of quoting in full passages cited swell the commentary on thirteen pages of text to the appalling number of 121 pages.

There are places where opinions upon interpretation may differ, but in general the author's views are sound and well supported.

The translation into blank verse which ends the volume is well executed, being with one exception exact, readable, and spirited. On p. 240 there is a strange misapprehension of Petronius' meaning. The translation reads:

One common charge,
One doom awaits us all, but I will pay
To all my debt: I have not fought alone.

The words *reddenda est gratia vobis* do not mean "I will pay my debt to all" but "They must pay to all the debt," and are ironical, referring to Caesar's enemies whose vengeance is to fall upon Caesar's soldiers as well as upon Caesar himself.

Turning to the commentary we read "Caesar was always most generous in recognizing the services of his officers and men," clearly indicating that it is no mere slip in translation but a complete misunderstanding of the meaning.

JOSEPH B. PIKE